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ABSTRACT

This report reviews the current characteristics of faculty in higher education institutions compared to those of faculty members 20 years ago. It is based on fall 1995 data and 1976 comparison data. A major finding is a substantial increase (91 percent) in the number of part-time faculty compared with an increase of 27 percent in the number of full-time faculty. In two-year colleges, 64 percent of the faculty worked part-time compared with only 31 percent of faculty in four-year institutions. An increase in the overall number of faculty members is due primarily to a doubling of women faculty members and a tripling of women faculty teaching on a part-time basis. Since 1975, all minorities have increased their share of full-time faculty positions. In 1995, 52 percent of full-time faculty members were tenured and 20 percent were on tenure track: a larger portion of minority faculty members and females were on tenure track than were white, non-Hispanic faculty members or males. Twenty-nine percent of full-time faculty members were professors: 36 percent of men had this rank; the highest percentage of women was at the assistant professor level. Tables and figures provide additional detail. (DB)

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Update

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Faculty in Academe

This report reviews the current characteristics of faculty members in higher education institutions compared to those 20 years ago. This time period is long enough to mark changes in the number of part-time faculty members and the increasing presence of women and minorities in the teaching ranks.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995* report is the basis for this analysis. Colleges and universities reported on the numbers of employees for the fall of 1995. This report discusses the composition of higher education faculty and compares it to that of 1976. These data represent the most current and only comprehensive data source on the number of full- and part-time faculty members in higher education institutions.

OVERVIEW

As full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment increased 25 percent over the past 20 years, the number of faculty members in higher education increased 47 percent.[1] However, the magnitude of change over the two decades of part- and full-time faculty members was dramatically different. Part-time faculty almost doubled from 1976 to 1995, increasing 91 percent, while full-time faculty increased only 27 percent (see Table 1). This raises questions of equity and quality. Part-time faculty members are paid less than those who teach full-time, too often are unavailable to students outside of class, and have little access to professional development.

Table 1

Number of faculty members, according to employment status and full-time new hires in higher education institutions in 1976 and 1995

	1976	1995	Change from 1976 to 1995
Total faculty	633,210	931,706	47%
Part-time faculty	199,139	380,884	91%
Full-time faculty	434,071	550,822	27%
Full-time new hires	37,302	30,785	-17%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), pp. B-5, B-6.

The number of full-time newly hired faculty decreased by 17 percent over the 20-year period.[2] This, along with the large increase in the number of part-time faculty members, suggests institutions have replaced full-time positions with part-time. The majority of full-time new hires in the fall 1995 were not tenure-track appointments (51%).

UTILIZATION OF PART-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS

The utilization of part-time faculty members differed by institutional sector: 41 per-

cent of the public college and university faculty members were part-time in 1995, compared to 39 percent of those in private, not-for-profit institutions.[2] Two-year colleges were the largest employer of part-time faculty members. Sixty-four percent of the faculty members worked part-time, compared to 31 percent of those in 4-year institutions (see Table 2).

Table 2

Number and percent of faculty members in higher education institutions according to employment status, by institutional type and control, 1995

	Number			Percent	
	Total	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time
Total	931,706	380,884	550,822	41%	59%
Institutional control					
Public	656,833	270,257	386,576	41%	59%
Private, not-for-profit	260,900	101,544	159,356	39%	61%
Private, for-profit	13,973	9,083	4,890	65%	35%
Institutional type					
2-year	284,415	182,744	101,671	64%	36%
4-year	647,059	198,052	449,007	31%	69%
Less than 2-year	232	144	88	62%	38%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p. B-10, B-17, B-24.

Table 3

Number of faculty members and full-time new hires by gender and employment status in 1976 and 1995, and percent change from 1976 to 1995

	1976	1995	Change from 1976 to 1995
Total	633,210	931,706	47%
Women	172,657	368,813	114%
Part-time	65,410	178,141	172%
Full-time	107,247	190,672	78%
Full-time new hires	8,952	13,853	55%
Men	460,553	562,893	22%
Part-time	133,553	202,743	52%
Full-time	326,824	360,150	10%
Full-time new hires	28,350	16,932	-40%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p. 1-7.

GENDER

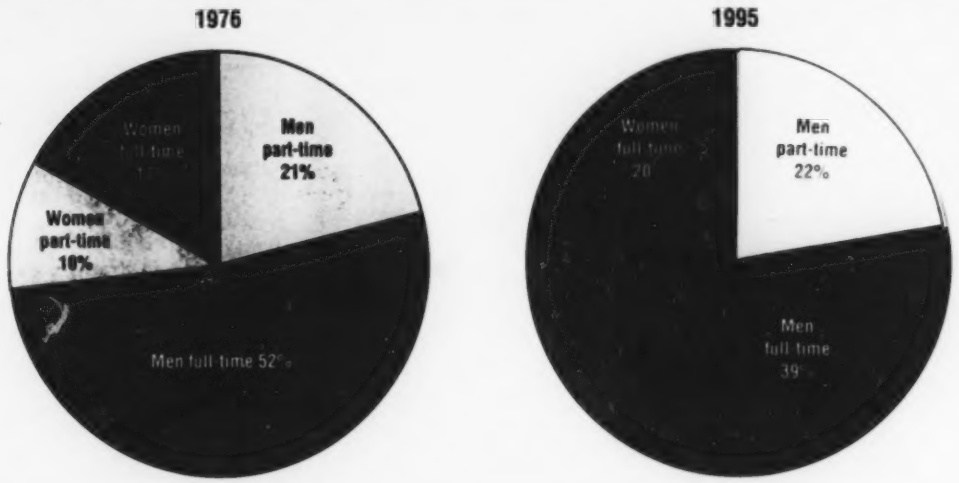
The majority of the increase in the number of faculty members can be attributed to an increasing number of women teaching in academe. The number of women faculty members more than doubled from 172,657 in 1976 to 368,813 in 1995, a 114 percent increase (Table 3). The number of male faculty members increased 22 percent over the same time period, 460,553 in 1976 to 562,893 in 1995. Further, the number of women faculty teaching on a part-time basis almost tripled over the two decades, increasing from 65,410 in 1976 to 178,141 in 1995. The number of men teaching on a part-time basis over the same time period increased by 52 percent, from 133,729 to 202,743.

While women comprised 24 percent of the newly hired full-time faculty in 1976, they were 45 percent of the new hires in 1995. The number of newly hired full-time female faculty members increased by 55 percent over the 20 years, while the number of newly hired men decreased 40 percent.

The large increase in the number of women faculty members and the moderate increase in men caused a distributional change in the proportions of men and women faculty members. The portion of faculty mem-

Figure 1

Percentage distribution of faculty members by gender and employment status, 1976 and 1995



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*. NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p. 1-7.

bers that were female (summing the part- and full-time women faculty members) increased from 27 to 39 percent from 1976 to 1995; this was a 12 percent change (Figure 1). However, the portion of faculty members that were women teaching full-time only increased 3 percent, from 17 to 20 percent. The result was a distribution change mainly seen in proportional changes in women teaching part-time and men teaching full-time. The portion of faculty members that were male teaching full-time declined 13 percent over the 20 years.

On average, about one-half, 48 percent, of women faculty members worked on a part-time basis in 1995. This compares to about one-third, 36 percent, of men faculty members working on a part-time basis. Although public 4-year institutions utilized women as full-time faculty more than the average, the 68 percent of women who worked full-time in public 4-year institutions was smaller than that of men — 80 percent. Full-time women faculty members comprised a smaller portion than men in private, 4-year institutions where 55 percent of women compared to 65 percent of men worked full-time.

RACE/ETHNICITY

Since 1975, all minorities increased their share of full-time faculty positions. Overall, minorities comprised 8.3 percent of full-time faculty members in 1975 and 13.8 percent in 1995 (Table 4). Asian/Pacific Islander faculty members had the largest increase over the 20-year period, from 2.2 to 6.0 percent. The portion of Black, non-Hispanic faculty members increased from 4.4 to 5.0 percent and Hispanic increased from 1.4 to 2.4 percent. American Indian/Alaskan Native faculty members accounted for only 0.4 percent of all faculty members in 1995, up from 0.2 percent in 1975. The resulting share of white, non-Hispanic faculty members decreased from

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91.7 percent in 1975 to 86.3 percent in 1995.

TENURE

In 1995, 52 percent of the full-time faculty members were tenured, and 20 percent were on tenure track (Table 5). More white, non-Hispanic faculty members were tenured than faculty members of any other race/ethnicity: 54 percent of white, non-Hispanics were tenured compared to 40 to 46 percent of minority faculty members. However, a larger portion of the minority faculty members were on tenure track in 1995 than white, non-Hispanic faculty members, 25 to 28 percent for minorities compared to 19 percent for white, non-Hispanic faculty members. Further, the portion of new minority faculty members hired on tenured track was greater than that of non-minorities in 1995 — 46 and 47 percent compared to 43 percent.

Fifty-nine percent of male faculty members were tenured compared to 39 percent of female; however, 18 percent of men and 25 percent of women were on tenure track. This represents the rising tide of newly hired women.

As higher proportions of women and minorities advance on the tenure track, the proportions of women

Table 4

Percentage distribution of full-time faculty in institutions of higher education by race/ethnicity in 1975 and 1995

	1975	1995
Total (number)	435,000*	550,822
Race/ethnicity		
White, non-Hispanic	91.7%	86.3%
Black, non-Hispanic	4.4%	5.0%
Hispanic	1.4%	2.4%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.2%	6.0%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	0.2%	0.4%

*Estimated number.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p. 2-8.

Table 5

Number of full-time faculty members and full-time new hires, percent tenured, on tenure track, or with other tenure status by race/ethnicity and gender: 1995

	Total	Tenured	On track	Other
		All full-time faculty members		
Total	550,822	52%	20%	28%
Race/ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	468,518	54%	19%	27%
Black non-Hispanic	26,835	40%	28%	32%
Hispanic	12,942	45%	27%	28%
Asian/Pacific Islander	27,572	46%	26%	28%
American Indian	2,156	41%	25%	34%
Other	12,799	15%	30%	55%
Gender				
Male	360,150	59%	18%	24%
Female	190,672	39%	25%	37%
		Full-time new hires		
Total	30,785	5%	43%	51%
Race/ethnicity				
White, non-Hispanic	23,883	5%	43%	52%
Black non-Hispanic	1,840	4%	47%	49%
Hispanic	983	5%	46%	49%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,866	5%	47%	48%
American Indian	186	5%	46%	49%
Other	2,027	8%	34%	58%
Gender				
Male	17,008	6%	44%	50%
Female	13,777	4%	42%	54%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p.3-6.

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and minority tenured faculty members may converge with men and non-minority faculty members in the future.

FACULTY MEMBERS BY RANK

Twenty-nine percent of full-time faculty members were professors in 1995 (Table 6). By race, a larger portion of white, non-Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders were professors than those of other races. At the associate level, with the exception of American Indians and those of other race/ethnicity, the portion of faculty members by race/ethnicity was only slightly dispersed from the average of 23 percent.

The rank of professor had the highest percentage for men, 36 percent, while 15 percent of women were professors. The highest percentage of women was at the assistant level, 30 percent. Further, twice as many women as men held instructor positions, 18 compared to 9 percent. Again, this may reflect the shifting age demographics between men and women in the profession.

CONCLUSION

Over the past 20 years, the number of faculty members increased by almost 50 percent; however, the number of part-time faculty members nearly doubled while the number of full-time faculty members increased by about one-quarter. This reflects a long-term trend in hiring. In part it represents a cost saving strategy by colleges and universities. This trend also occurred when more students were enrolling part-time.

The new faculty is slowly decreasing the dominance of white males in faculty positions. The majority white, non-Hispanic and male members continue to dominate the statistics. However, the number of women teaching in academe increased dramatically over the two decades, but women are more likely to be hired in part-time or temporary full-time positions. More women and minorities were in tenure track positions than white, non-

Table 6

Number of full-time faculty members and percentage distribution according to rank, by selected characteristics: 1995

	Total faculty	Professor	Associate	Assistant	Instructor	Lecturer	Other
Total	551,092	29%	23%	24%	12%	2%	10%
Race/ethnicity							
White, non-Hispanic	468,788	30%	23%	22%	12%	2%	10%
Black non-Hispanic	26,835	18%	21%	30%	18%	3%	10%
Hispanic	12,942	19%	20%	29%	20%	3%	9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	27,572	28%	22%	31%	8%	2%	9%
American Indian	2,156	17%	16%	24%	24%	3%	16%
Other	12,799	10%	11%	38%	10%	4%	27%
Gender							
Male	360,150	36%	24%	20%	9%	2%	9%
Female	190,672	15%	21%	30%	18%	4%	13%
Institution level							
4-year institutions	449,007	32%	26%	27%	6%	3%	6%
2-year institutions	101,815	13%	9%	10%	38%	0%	29%

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. E.D. TABS: *Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995*, NCES 98-228, by Stephen Roey and Rebecca Rak. Project Officers, Rosa Fernandez and Sam Barbett (Washington, D.C.: 1998), p. B-44-45.

Hispanic and male faculty members. Thus, over the next several decades, the proportion of tenured faculty may equalize.

End Notes

[1] U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics. *Digest of Education Statistics 1997*, NCES 98-015, by Thomas D. Snyder. Production Manager, Charlene M. Hoffman. Program Analyst, Claire M. Geddes. (Washington DC: 1997) p. 182.

[2] The Fall Staff Survey only collects data on full-time new hires; information on part-time new hires is not collected.

[3] Faculty members in private, for-profit institutions comprise 1 percent of all faculty members in higher education institutions. They are included here so totals reported herein agree with those reported in *NCES's Fall Staff in Postsecondary Institutions, 1995* report; however this discussion focuses on public and private, not-for-profit institutions.

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